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MONDAY, OCTOBER 13, 1902

SELECTION OF ORATORS

Some members of the faculty have suggested that the classes begin at once to select their orators so that they may have plenty of time to prepare for the local contest. We think the suggestion a pertinent and seasonable one. Hitherto the practice has been to defer the selection of orators till some time in December. This gives the orator scarcely two months to prepare for the contest. His subject must be selected; his method of treatment must be chosen; his outline must be constructed; the oration developed, memorized and rehearsed in this short time.

Of course, if the student had all his time to devote to the work, two months might be time enough. Other things demand a share of his attention and the small portion of his time which he can give to his oration is painfully inadequate to the task before him. Thus too often an orator enters the local contest poorly prepared and fails to evince his best powers. One who has been fortunate enough to have a little more time, may deliver his oration more smoothly and display a little more finish and thus win out over one whose possibilities are greater, but who, on account of being hampered by lack of time, has failed to do his best. To even up the scale, let them all begin early.

It can not be too often emphasized that a great oration or anything approaching a great oration, is a slow growth. It must come to maturity as the grain ripens in the field; it must be unfolded bit by bit as the rose unfolds its petals; it must be built as the chambered nautilus builds its shell slowly piling apartment on top of apartment, until the completed structure meets the admiring gaze of the observer.

The relative strength of different passages must be carefully consid-

ered; a sentence must be modified or cut out here, another substituted there; a word must be displaced by another more apt or more effective, till the highest reach of his power is attained.

Nor is the preparation for a delivery a more speedy process. The difference between two renderings of the same sentence may win or lose a contest. The voice must reveal in all its fullness the loftiest conception of the intellect, the deepest emotion of the soul.

Then too a certain amount of time is necessary for the student to forget the details of the process by which the final result is reached. He must forget the slow and somewhat laborious steps by which he has reached the mountain top and feel only the inspiration of the height.

We have some of the strongest men to put forward in the contest; the presidency is ours; the contest is to be held in Eugene, where our representative will be stimulated to the highest reach of his powers by the presence of a sympathetic audience.

Let us begin early and go in with a determination to win.

ABOUT SOCIETIES

During the hustle and bustle of the opening weeks of college; the perfecting of student and class organizations; the working up of football enthusiasm, we seem to have forgotten that once there existed in the University three literary societies, already we have had the inquiry, "Where are the literary societies? When will they begin work?" They seem to have been completely swallowed up in the swirl of things in general. This should not be so. Six years ago the literary societies were the most flourishing organizations in the University. The air was full of society enthusiasm and rivalry, and nearly every student deemed it his imperative duty to join a society and take a part in its proceedings. Last year the societies were scarcely able to keep on their feet.

We are now facing a new college year in which opportunities for society work were never better. These opportunities should not be neglected. No college man is so busy that he can afford to neglect society work. Whatever his aim in life, whether he becomes a lawyer, a doctor or an engineer, he should be able, if necessity demands, to rise before an audience and voice his convictions in an easy and forcible manner. The society is the only place where the student can form the habit of reasoning with a crowd as he would with an individual and of instantly accommodating expression to thought.

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